

# THE ATONEMENT

AND

## MODERN LIBERALISM.

BY THE

REV. STEPHEN CARD,

*Protestant Chaplain Reformatory for Boys, Penetanguishene.*

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TORONTO :

WILLIAM BRIGGS,

WESLEY BUILDINGS.

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F-5012-1892.C266



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## PREFACE.

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THIS work, on the vicarious nature of Christ's Atonement, has at least one merit—it is short. I trust, however, the reader will find that the argument is not weakened by its brevity. I have been induced to publish it because I believe that a plain, concise statement of this important doctrine, together with the Scriptural basis upon which it rests, is needed. The author believes that the argument contained in the following pages is conclusive. My earnest prayer is that the publication of this modest booklet may do good ; that it may bring glory and honor and praise to Him, whose precious blood constitutes the only basis of a penitent sinner's faith, or of a believer's hope.

S. C.



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# THE ATONEMENT, AND MODERN LIBERALISM.

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## PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS.

There are certain doctrines of Scripture that are considered fundamental by the principal denominations of Christendom. That these denominations, without previous understanding, and without compromise, should all reach the same conclusions, and should all find the same great truths taught in the Bible; that all these years of research, of Biblical criticism, of Biblical revision, have not eliminated or revised a single one of these essential truths, establishes conclusively two great facts. First, it proves that the doctrines thus held are Scriptural; and secondly, it proves that the Bible is a reliable basis for our religious belief; that as a book of instruction, as a revelation from God to mankind, it fully and triumphantly meets the case. To the scholar, and to the unsophisticated, the Bible reveals the same great truths, and teaches the same great doctrines.

In regard to truths of minor importance, there should be, as there is, liberty. But in essentials there must be, in each denomination, unity. If some ministers, however unquestionable their sincerity or their piety, were

allowed vigorously to oppose what other ministers of the same body as vigorously preached as truth, the Church would soon be plunged into a condition of uncertainty, confusion and strife, that would seriously imperil, if not ultimately destroy it. There must be a standard of doctrine to appeal to ; there must be authority to deal with this so-called " Liberal Preaching," or the Church permitting such irregularities would soon become but a rope of sand.

Every man certainly has a right to whatever opinions he may choose to hold in regard to Scripture, so long as in the practical working out of his opinions he does not interfere with the rights of others. But if these opinions are out of harmony with the well-known views held by his denomination—and if a minister, out of harmony with the views he himself once held, and that in his ordination vows he promised to preach and to defend—then honor demands, not that he should renounce his opinions, but that he should step out of the Church, with whose doctrinal standards he no longer agrees, and go where he may hold his opinions to his heart's content.

One fundamental doctrine that Liberalism has most vigorously assailed is that of Christ's Vicarious Atonement.

## I.—THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

Two theories embrace substantially the theological formations of the centuries, in regard to the nature of the Atonement, viz., the theory of Liberalism, and the Vicarious theory.

As nearly as we are able to learn, the following is the theory of Liberalism : God was never offended at men for their sins ; He never intended to punish the sinner with eternal death ; Christ did not die for the sins of the world ; the principle of substitution is erroneous ; Christ came to bring comfort to the race, and by example and precept, to build up a purer manhood. He came to teach men, and to show them that God loves them ; no man will go to hell forever ; those who go there will be liberated in good time through the infinite mercy of God.

The vicarious theory of the Atonement. Man has violated the divine law and is an offender ; God in His judicial character is offended ; God's law says, sin must be punished ; sin cut men off from God, and left the race without hope ; Jesus Christ, moved by infinite love, comes forward and offers Himself as a Substitute for all men, as a sacrifice for sin ; not to pay a debt, but to vindicate a principle ; not to satisfy an angry passion in Deity—as some imagine—but to maintain the majesty, the supremacy, the authority of God's law throughout the universe, so that God can be *just* when He pardons the sinner.

We cannot do better than to present an extract from the "Prayer of Consecration," as contained in the ritual of the Methodist Church in the service for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is precisely after the form for the same service in the Church of England :

"Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption ;

who made there by His oblation of Himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

Here the nature, purpose and extent of the atonement of Christ, is expressed with unparalleled clearness and accuracy.

In the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Church is the following :

No. 21.—"The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual ; *and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone.*"

God's love to the race is not the fruit of the Atonement; the Atonement is the fruit of His love that antedated it.

By this universal atonement every human being of the race is placed upon savable ground. No man will ever be damned for rejecting an atonement that was not made for him ; or for refusing a salvation that was never within his reach. Life is an opportunity to accept Christ and be saved. In Him there is a salvation needed by all, a salvation provided for all, and a salvation offered to all. Men who reject Christ enter at death into a state of endless punishment. Those who die in Christ enter at once into a state of endless happiness. There is grand inspiration and soul invigoration in the character, and ministry, and miracles of Christ ; but salvation, salvation from sin, comes alone through faith in the precious blood of Jesus. His atonement is the life-boat, plunging through the

roaring breakers and the angry storm, to rescue the poor souls that are clinging to yon sinking wreck. Heaven pity the man that would try to scuttle that life-boat.

## II.—WHAT DID CHRIST JESUS COME TO THIS WORLD FOR ?

The living vital question is, For what purpose did Jesus Christ come to this world? There are serious and insuperable objections that lie against the theory of Liberalism. The most serious objection is, that it is in direct conflict with the plain and oft-repeated declarations of Scripture. As St. Augustine remarks, “It avails not what I say, what you say, what he says, *but what saith the Lord?*”

Paul in his Epistle to the Romans says: “God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” The very thing that Liberalism denies is here affirmed to be the highest proof of God’s love to us.

The fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians furnishes us with a most clear and decisive statement of this subject as Paul understood it. Let me quote: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand.

“By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, *first of all* that which I also received, *how that Christ died for our sins*, according to the Scriptures.



“ And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” Now there are several things affirmed here, and a few other things taught. He says that there were two important doctrines that he preached to the Corinthians ; that the Corinthians received these doctrines ; that they were saved by believing them ; that they were enabled to stand by the support these doctrines furnished ; that the first of these doctrines was the more important ; yet as two chosen out of many they were both exceedingly important doctrines. The direct effect of the belief of these doctrines upon the religious life and character and comfort of these Corinthians was of the highest importance to them, and its consideration is certainly of the highest importance to us. Now, what were these two doctrines ? “ *First of all how that Christ died for our sins,*” and the second was, His burial and His resurrection. *This*, Paul says, is THE GOSPEL. The first, and the greater, of these two doctrines, Liberalism and Socinians generally, for three hundred years, have denied.

This gospel that he preached to the Corinthians, that saved the Corinthians, he preached also to the Galatians, so he informs us. In his Epistle to them he writes : “ Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, *Who gave Himself for our sins*, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God our Father, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen !”

Furthermore : “ And I certify you, brethren, that

the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

We thank God, Paul, for your grand testimony that Jesus Christ died for our sins. We are fully satisfied that Christ revealed this glorious doctrine to you ; but who revealed to these doubters and objectors that Christ did *not* die for our sins? *He* certainly never has.

Isaiah tells us, that the Lord hath laid on HIM *the iniquity of us all*. This is too serious a matter, and the eternal interests of humanity are of too much importance, to justify the employment of such language as the inspired prophet here uses, and repeats elsewhere, if the doctrine of vicarious atonement is not true.

This burden, "the iniquity of us all," Jesus was bearing when John met Him, for he said, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" He bore this heavy burden to Calvary, for Paul says that by the grace of God He tasted death for every man.

These are sufficient for our present purpose. Nothing can be plainer than that Christ Jesus, in addition to the benefits conferred upon men by His matchless character, His luminous teaching, and His marvellous miracles—actually died for their sins. It is not a matter of inference, it is a matter of record. The *gospel that saves men* has for its first and greatest truth that "Christ died for our sins." Paul says the Corinthians believed this, and it saved them. If it is not

true, if it is erroneous, then the Corinthians were saved by believing a falsehood, and Paul by his testimony confirms the fraud, thereby becoming an accessory after the act.

### III.—A FEW ERRORS CONSIDERED.

After the system of exclusion in the diagnosis of disease, and following somewhat also the rules of a debate, we shall *briefly* introduce in the midst of our discussion of this subject the consideration of some errors rather than leave them to be considered at the close. Such an examination of some mistaken views is necessary to a clear understanding of the great doctrine of the Atonement.

#### ERROR NUMBER ONE.

That there was a literal and in some way a decisive atonement made for some that assures them eternal life, while for the rest of the world there was an ineffectual atonement or no atonement at all made, is a view that antagonizes the plainest statements of Scripture, and, therefore, cannot be true. An ineffectual atonement, an atonement only in name and not in reality, is equivalent to no atonement at all. John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the *sin of the world*." This testimony of John is packed with meaning. Here is the Old Testament doctrine of sacrifice, of substitution. But this time the offering is not an animal, the offering is "*the Lamb of God*." Furthermore, the offering of this Lamb is not merely for the Jews. All distinctions



of condition, nation, clime or color vanish. "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*"

"God so loved *the world* that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That God LOVED the world, the whole world, a world of sinners, no reasonable person will question : and just as many as He loved He sent His Son to die for. If His love included the world, then the atonement of His Son included the world. The prophet comes to our assistance, and says Why, "the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity *of us ALL.*"

The fact is, there has been but *one* atonement made for sin, and that was for *all* ; "that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." *There was just as good an atonement made for one man as another.* Men will not be lost because no atonement was made for them, but because they reject the one that *was* made. A salvation needed by all, a salvation provided for all, a salvation offered to all, and a salvation adapted to all, is the salvation of the gospel.

#### ERROR NUMBER TWO.

That the atonement of Christ in some mysterious manner renders repentance unnecessary, and emasculates justifying faith, until nothing is left but the name, is a damnable heresy. No matter what the Bible teaches about the atonement, there are two things, among others, that God demands in His Word and that

He has never ceased to demand. In the most explicit language He has attached a finality to these two demands. In words plain enough for all to understand, He has said : " Except ye *repent*, ye shall all likewise perish." Again, " But now *commandeth* ALL MEN EVERYWHERE TO REPENT." To the penitent jailer, Paul said : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved ;" " He that believeth not shall be damned." He did believe, and he was saved that very night. The apostles everywhere preached, " Repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Repentance may be defined (See Watson) as " a godly sorrow wrought in the heart of a sinful person by the Word and Spirit of God, whereby from a sense of sin as offensive to God, and endangering to his own soul, and from a sense of the mercy of God in Christ, he with a true sorrow turns from his sins to God as his only Saviour." Justifying faith, to quote the same author, may be stated to be, " Assent, with *reliance* ; belief, with *trust*." This is not to merit salvation, but to meet God's demands, and to comply with His requirements by repenting of our sins and by the exercise of faith, which is the condition of salvation. These are the two things that God demands, and He will give us the new heart. To teach men that they have no conditions to meet in order to be saved, that Christ has done it all, is to present a view of the atonement utterly unwarranted by Scripture and that imperils the interests of immortal souls.

## ERROR NUMBER THREE.

That the atonement is so effectual in the case of believers as to render it *impossible* for them to fall away and miss their heavenly reward will not bear the test of Scripture.

We have already shown, what is now generally believed, that the atonement is universal. If all men have been redeemed, then all men are free moral agents. "He is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance." He will not be likely to exclude any for whom He has made an atonement. If men are lost, they are lost because they reject salvation. They are free to choose it, or refuse it ; are therefore responsible, are therefore free. Now, one question : Does a change of heart destroy human freedom ? "No !" you say. "No," all will say. Then are believers, while living, exposed to the possibility of falling, and missing heaven, and therefore is there the utmost need that they "watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation." "The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression" ; "neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness in the day that he sinneth."

"When I shall say to the righteous that he shall surely live : if he trust to his own righteousness and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered ; but for his iniquity that he hath committed he shall die."

So says Ezekiel. This Scripture plainly proves that religion does not destroy man's freedom, and

maintains the position taken above. By the grace of God, however, the weakest believer may triumph over all his enemies, and win the crown of life.

“ For Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees.”

#### ERROR NUMBER FOUR.

That Christ died for all men, and that, therefore, all men will be saved, is the last error we shall examine. This is a very easy and expeditious method of disposing of the question of human destiny—“ the why, and the whither.” Without repentance, without justifying faith, without the new birth, into the kingdom of God, all men are going to heaven. If this is true, then some of us have gone to a great deal of unnecessary trouble. A few roughts and scoundrels are to be detained in a place where the climate is admitted to be uncomfortably warm. They will be held on a sort of indeterminate sentence, but will soon merit promotion, and will get there all right. If it were not for the Bible, this theory might be popular ; but unfortunately for it, the Scriptures have a very short and decisive way of dealing with these imaginary schemes. The Bible says, “ Repent, or perish ! Believe, or be damned ! Be converted, or you shall not see the kingdom of God.” For a long time there was a dispute over the words “ everlasting ” and “ eternal,” in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. But the new version comes along and ends the dispute by making both heaven and hell, in that twenty-sixth verse, “ eternal ” ; which harmonizes it with the testimony of the rest of the Scriptures.

Of course every intelligent student of the Bible knew, before the revised version was thought of, that the words "everlasting" and "eternal" in that twenty-sixth verse were from the same word in the original.

There is as much said in the Bible about eternal punishment as there is about eternal happiness ; and if God's threatenings are not reliable, His promises cannot be. There is no reasoning under the heavens that can destroy the one doctrine without destroying the other. All this rubbish about what "an earthly father would not do to his child," is supremely absurd. That poor child must be tired. Why, Jesus is the embodiment of kindness. His very name is a synonym of all that is tender, and humane, and loving. And yet *His* lips supply us with the strongest proofs, the most thrilling descriptions, of eternal punishment. *He* furnishes the information that between heaven and hell "there is a great gulf fixed," so deep and wide and terrible that no soul can ever get to heaven that is sent to hell. It is *He* that consigns the wicked to a punishment that is endless. The torrent of denunciation that He poured upon that gang of hypocritical Pharisees was the most terrific that ever fell upon mortal ears. It was full of the most fiery suggestions that eternal damnation was not very far off from them. As we heard Bishop Bowman once say, "The question is *not*, 'What do people like to hear?' but, '*What is true?*'"



#### IV.—THE VICARIOUS NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT.

1. *The Case of Infants and Heathen.*—To show more fully the necessity of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, take the case of infants dying in infancy. How are they to be saved? They know nothing of Christ's character or teaching; and if He did not die for them, how, and on what principle are they taken to heaven? They are saved unconditionally through the atonement, as adults are saved conditionally. If not, how are they saved? Surely no one doubts their salvation. Here, then, are millions of Adam's race without a Christ, without a Saviour. They must be saved then, outside the scheme of redemption entirely. But if God can save so many millions of the race without any atonement, why not extend the principle of prerogative, and save all?

Then there are the heathen. Whatever Christ came to this world to do, they are in blissful ignorance of it; and if He has made no atonement for the world, here are millions, yes, half the race, that are not touched by Jesus Christ in the remotest manner. For all the benefit He is to them, they might as well have been born in Jupiter. According to the vicarious, the substitution theory of the Atonement, Christ died for the heathen; and while they are accountable, yet all that God will hold them responsible for, is, that they do the best they can with the limited light they have. The atonement covers all the rest. The many and decisive passages of Scripture we have already quoted to prove

a universal atonement, fully support this view. According to Liberalism, what reason will the millions of infants and the millions of heathen ever have to praise the Lord Jesus? The reasons that angels have, and no more. But, they belong to "*the World*," that God so loved, and that His son died to save, and their voices will swell the mighty chorus of salvation through the blood of the Lamb.

2. *The Principle of Substitution in the Old Testament.*—The word "atonement" occurs a great many times in the Old Testament, especially in the history of the sacrifices and offerings of the Jewish Church, during the fifteen hundred years from Moses to Christ. To make reconciliation, or to reconcile, in the Hebrew, is the same as to make atonement, or to atone. In the New Testament (Old Version), the word atonement occurs but once. But the same word that is translated atonement in this one place, is translated reconciliation, or to reconcile, in many other places. The word atonement, according to Webster, means, "To make reparation or satisfaction for an offence or a crime, by which reconciliation is procured between the offended and the offending parties." He quotes Shakespeare, "He seeks to make atonement between the Duke of Gloucester and your brothers." In the Bible, where the word is used in a strictly religious sense, this is also the precise meaning of the word atonement. In Scripture the word atonement represents the means used whereby a reconciliation was effected between the offending sinner and his offended God.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, go to the altar, and

offer thy sin offering, and make an atonement for thyself and for the people."

3. A glance at the nature and design of the sacrifices of the Jewish Church, and their interpretation according to the New Testament, will give us much light upon this important doctrine of substitution.

The animal sacrifices of the law were divided into three kinds : Sin offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings. In all these offerings, the presentation of the offering, the imposition of the offerer's hands, and the act of slaughter were the same. But *in all these sacrifices, the blood was offered on the altar, as an expiation for sin.* In all these sacrifices, the doctrine of atonement was distinctly present. In fact they had no other purpose to serve. In Leviticus i. 4 we read, "He shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering" (which was offered twice a day), and it shall be accepted for him to make an atonement for him." Both in this and in the trespass offering, persons committing sin, and refusing to offer these sacrifices, had to bear their iniquity. Of the great day of atonement it was said, "This shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, once a year." Lev. xvii. 11 defines the meaning of every bleeding sacrifice : "For the life of the flesh is in the blood ; and I have given it to you, upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls ; for *it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*"

*Here is substitution*, a divinely established system of substitution, that maintained its place and power for four thousand years. The animal suffers death as a



substitute for the offerer, and Jehovah, who gave the blood as the means of atonement, recognizes and accepts the substitution. And in this manner "the priest shall make an atonement for him, for his sin which he hath sinned, *and it shall be forgiven him.*"

Two great principles are distinctly exhibited in all these sacrifices. In the first place, there was something in the character and government of God, which presented a hindrance to the obtaining of pardon by the sinner ; a hindrance that he could not remove, and that therefore had to be removed for him. In the second place, there was for the removal of the said hindrance, the sacrificial substitution of an animal's life for the forfeited life of the sinner. A substitution, *appointed by God*, and presented by the sinner who sought forgiveness of God. Such is the plain import of Old Testament teaching, upon the doctrine of atonement for sin.

But surely, no man in his senses will suppose that the blood of an ox, or of an heifer, or of a goat, of itself, possessed one particle of virtue towards atoning for sin. Now, what is the obvious fact? Why, this. These sacrifices were all *provisional* ; "the means of atonement, in the blood of slain animals, was given by God for the time then present ;" but the clear light of the New Testament proves conclusively that all the sacrifices of the Jewish Church, yea, all the sacrifices offered for four thousand years, derived their atoning value, and *all their value*, from Christ's sacrifice of Himself upon the cross for the sins of the world. The *only valid atonement ever offered* was that that Christ Him-

self made, when, as Paul says, "He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."

4. *The New Testament Interpretation of the Sacrifices of the Law.*—In the ninth and tenth chapters of his Epistle to the Hebrews, Paul discusses this very doctrine of substitution, and by inspired and most decisive statements, shows its absolute necessity. The word substitution is not in Paul's text, it is true, but the *doctrine* is. It is the *doctrine* that concerns us. Such words are used because they are expressive. A play upon words shows the weakness of an argument. The words, depravity, divinity of Christ, Trinity, and others often used, are not in the Bible. Are the doctrines there that they represent? Yes, and common consent justifies the use of the word that most accurately expresses the thought that it is intended to convey. After speaking of the services and sacrifices of the priests, the sacrifices offered for sin, as having been imposed upon them, "for the time then present," he proceeds as follows :

"But Christ being come, an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building ; neither by the blood of goats and of calves, but by *His own blood*, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

The high priest, once a year, on the great day of atonement, took the blood of goats and calves, and entered into the holy of holies, and sprinkled that blood in solemn silence before the Lord, to make an atonement for the people. Read Heb. ix. 13, 14.

Paul, in the passage quoted, refers to the great day of atonement, and he says that Jesus is *our* great High Priest, and that He has made an atonement for us, not by offering the blood of calves and goats, but by "His own blood"; that His *one* offering is sufficient, for by it He obtained "eternal redemption for us." He came for the purpose, Paul says, of being our High Priest, to offer such a sacrifice and make such an atonement for us. His sacrifice, Paul says, avails "*for the transgressions under the first Testament*" (that is, from Adam to Christ), and so he proves our position, that *the sacrifices of the law obtained all their value from the one sacrifice that He offered.*

He then proceeds: "Where a Testament is, there *must* also, of *necessity*, be the death of the testator; for a Testament is of force *after men are dead*; it is of *no strength at all while the testator liveth.*" Now, this was written expressly to prove that Christ's death was an absolute necessity, in order that the world might have access to the "good things" that our great High Priest came to secure for them. A will is of no use to the heirs while the owner of the property willed is alive. So, Paul reasons, *Christ's* death is everything to the world.

Furthermore, "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and *without shedding of blood is no remission.*" Without the blood of Christ no salvation. Words cannot be plainer, arguments cannot be stronger, than the words and the arguments Paul here uses to prove the vicarious theory of Christ's atonement for sin. He carries the argument still further in

the tenth chapter. "*It is not possible* that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin." Well, what blood is able to do it? "By His *own blood* He hath obtained eternal redemption for us." "This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."

5. The hymns of the Wesleys are saturated with the doctrine of vicarious atonement, and constitute an important link in the chain of evidence thereof. The hymns that follow are fair examples :

O Thou, whose offering on the tree  
The legal offerings all foreshowed,  
Borrowed their whole effect from Thee,  
And drew their virtue from Thy blood :

The blood of goats, and bullocks slain,  
Could never for one sin atone ;  
To purge the guilty offerer's stain,  
Thine was the work, and Thine alone.

Vain in themselves their duties were ;  
Their services could never please,  
Till joined with Thine, and made to share  
The merits of Thy righteousness.

Forward they cast a faithful look  
On Thy approaching sacrifice ;  
And thence their pleasing savour took,  
And rose accepted to the skies.

Those feeble types, and shadows old,  
Are all in Thee, the Truth, fulfilled ;  
We in Thy sacrifice behold  
The substance of those rights revealed.

Thy meritorious sufferings past,  
 We see by faith to us brought back  
 And on Thy grand oblation cast,  
 Its saving benefits partake.

—*Charles Wesley.*

---

O Thou eternal Victim, slain  
 A sacrifice for guilty man,  
 By the eternal Spirit made  
 An offering in the sinner's stead ;  
 Our everlasting Priest art Thou,  
 And plead'st Thy death for sinners now.

Thy offering still continues new ;  
 Thy vesture keeps its crimson hue ;  
 Thou stand'st the ever-slaughtered Lamb ;  
 Thy priesthood still remains the same ;  
 Thy years, O God, can never fail,  
 Thy goodness is unchangeable.

O that our faith may never move,  
 But stand unshaken as Thy love !  
 Sure evidence of things unseen,  
 Now let it pass the years between,  
 And view Thee bleeding on the tree,  
 My God, who dies for me, for me.

—*Charles Wesley.*

6. *Some Additional Considerations.*—And yet some man will say, “The substitution theory is dead, and almost buried ; and it were well for our theological atmosphere if it were buried.” Nay, verily ! It is far from dead. It is alive for evermore ! The Socinianism of the sixteenth century, that some have tried, but in vain, to galvanize into life, lies dead and buried under the ninth and tenth chapters of Paul's Epistle to the



Hebrews : yea, it lies entombed under the cumulative force and weight of the entire Scriptures. In the name of candor, in the name of our common Christianity, in the name of the twelve hundred millions of the world's inhabitants that need an atonement for sin, what do all the sacrifices of the Jewish nation, and all the sacrificial blood shed from Abel to Christ, mean? What do the numberless passages of the New Testament, that declare that Christ died for our sins, that salvation is through the blood of Christ : what do all these Scriptures mean? What mean all those statements of the Old Testament which declare that "He was wounded for our transgressions ; He was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes are we healed." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Webster defines the word "vicarious" to mean "substituted in the place of another ; as, a vicarious sacrifice." Was not the animal's life sacrificed, and its blood shed, under the law, as we have shown, as a substitute for the offerer, and did not God order and accept that substitution, and pardon the sins of the offerer? Most emphatically, yes! And, on the same principle, was not Christ's life sacrificed, and His blood shed, by divine appointment, for the sins of the world, and did not God accept that offering, and does He not offer pardon to every offender? We answer, yes, to each of these questions. Was it not the command of God, under the law, that he who refused to offer for his sins such an offering as He required, had to bear

his iniquity? It was. And if men to-day refuse to bring to God, for the pardon of their sins, the offering that He demands, even the precious blood of the Lamb of God, will they not have to bear their iniquity? Yes. Jesus could not come to this world and die every time a sinner wanted pardon; nor once a year, as on the great day of atonement. If he could have done so, we presume the principle of substitution would never have been questioned. "But now, *once*, in the end of the world, hath He appeared (hath He come to this world), to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." Because His *once* offering Himself is sufficient to make an atonement for all men, under both dispensations, and for all time, so that the sinner that seeks pardon may now come, bringing the blood of Jesus as his plea, and receive forgiveness, does this in any degree alter the great fact of substitution? Certainly not. It maintains it. How could the principle of substitution, of vicarious sacrifice, be ignored, or how carried further, in redeeming and placing within reach of salvation and heaven, a race of intelligent, *free*, responsible beings?

It will take something more than learned phrases and profound paragraphs to shake the faith of the Christian world in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and in the plain statements of the Word of God by which that faith is supported.

7. *Christ's death the great reconciling power.*—In the New Testament, the death of Christ for our sins is plainly said to be the great reconciler of men to God. "We are reconciled to God by the death of His Son."

“When we were enemies”—a time when men are hard to be moved—“we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” “All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ.” “I beseech you,” says the apostle, “in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God.” “The mightiest name in India to-day,” says a late eminent writer, “is the name of Jesus.” The simple story of the cross, “Jesus died for you,” is doing more than any other truth to lift the world up to God. It has melted the hardest hearts on this planet when all other means failed. It goes for the saying that these passages of Scripture, that hang like jewels upon His cross, ministers everywhere quote the oftenest and depend upon the most in their appeals to sinners, and their instructions to penitent souls. Rob the pulpit of *Paul’s* “*first of all*, how that Christ died for our sins,” and you may close your churches and call home your missionaries. The gospel that saved the Corinthians, and the Galatians, and the Hebrew Christians, and nearly the whole eastern world, is the gospel that must save the *whole world*, and it is going to do it. If Christ Jesus did not come to this world to die for sinners, and so to save sinners, what necessity was there of any divine Christ at all? The prophets and apostles were as grand men as ever walked this earth of God’s. They taught the grandest of truths, and died martyrs thereto. If this were all, what better is Christ than they? One might as well believe in Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or John, or Paul. We have never been fortunate enough to meet a man or to find an author who denied



the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, who could give an intelligent reason why the world needs a Divine Christ, or who could state, in language that ordinary mortals could understand, what *He* came to this world for. Socinus, who founded the sect of the Socinians, in the sixteenth century, was at least consistent. In rejecting the doctrine of Christ's atonement, he saw no need of any Divine Christ, so he rejected His divinity.

But Paul's "*First of all*," is to-day the rallying cry, the watchword, of all the principal denominations of Christendom—both Protestant and Roman Catholic. It was never so well understood, never so universally believed. Ministers are preaching it, Sabbath-schools are teaching it, and the millions of Christ's followers are singing it, the wide world over. Said the dying Father Basford, of Ingersoll, to his physician, "Doctor, I want you to tell everybody you see that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin."

Kennedy, the world-renowned singer of Scottish songs, closed his mortal career in one of our Canadian towns. After arranging his earthly affairs, just before he expired, he called his family around him and requested them to sing. He was asked what he would like to have them sing. "Sing," said the dying Scotchman, "Sing, 'Rock of Ages.'" He who had thrilled audiences on both continents, with his magnificent rendering of such Scotch songs as "The March o' the Cameron Men," now grasped with undying faith the Christ of Calvary ; and while his weeping family sang

for him, "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me," his glad soul went up to heaven to swell the chorus of redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
 Let me hide myself in Thee ;  
 Let the water and the blood,  
 From Thy wounded side which flowed,  
 Be of sin the double cure,  
 Save from wrath and make me pure.

Not the labor of my hands,  
 Can fulfil Thy law's demands ;  
 Could my zeal no respite know,  
 Could my tears forever flow,  
 All for sin could not atone,  
 Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring,  
 Simply to Thy cross I cling ;  
 Naked, come to Thee for dress,  
 Helpless, look to Thee for grace,  
 Foul, I to the Fountain fly,  
 Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
 When mine eyes shall close in death,  
 When I soar to worlds unknown,  
 See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
 Let me hide myself in Thee."



